

Even though this language contemplated moving forward in Europe, this is what we did regarding the United States. For quite a number of years, we planned to deploy 44 interceptor missiles—most in Alaska and a number in California. We talked about what to do about the Iranian threat, to provide redundant coverage for those missiles coming over from the east. We agreed that we would seek the agreement of Poland and the Czech Republic to base assets there. Fifty-four interceptors were to be deployed, 10 at the European site and 44 on the West Coast of the United States. What happened in this year's budget was that the 44 to be deployed in Alaska and California have been cut to 30.

The next technological advance to our missile defense system, the MEV—multikill vehicle—would be the warhead which could take out multiple incoming missiles with one missile. We think that was very capable technology that would be developed. That was zeroed out.

We had an additional system of a smaller but very high-speed interceptor, called a kinetic energy interceptor, KEI, that has been on the drawing board for a number of years and is showing a great deal of promise. That was zeroed out after years of funding.

We had plans and were working on the airborne laser, ABL, an amazing technology that our Defense Department believes will work—and we will test it this year. The airborne laser can knock down missiles, particularly in their ascent phase from an airplane. That missile system, after this year, will be zeroed out.

The 10 missiles we intended to base in Central Europe have been eliminated, it appears. At least that has been the President's recommendation and decision that we heard about today.

So I would say this: We believe, looking carefully at the numbers and putting in some extra loose change, for \$1 billion, we could fully deploy the full system—with the full compliment of 44 missiles in the United States and 10 in Europe. We have spent over \$20 billion to get to this point. So it is unthinkable to me that we would eliminate any future advancements in the system. I think, from a cost point of view, it is an unwise decision.

I am concluding that money is not the problem. I can only conclude that the Obama administration has decided that they agree with the naysayers who opposed President Reagan when he said this could ever be a successful system. They opposed it, and it looks like a political decision to me. Some sort of judgment decision to cancel this is involved here more than a dollars-and-cents issue because in the scheme of a \$500 billion-plus defense budget, \$1 billion over several years to complete the system as planned is not the kind of budget-breaking number that should cause us to change our policy.

Senator LIEBERMAN and I had offered this sense of the Senate amendment,

and it passed the Senate just a few weeks ago. I believe it is the right policy. I think the administration is trying to do some, perhaps, good things. They think maybe they are attempting to placate or somehow reach out to Russia and gain some strategic advantage from that—although the Secretary of Defense, I understand, today said it didn't have anything to do with the Russian foreign policy, and I am not sure the administration acknowledges that either. "The Czech premier, Jan Fischer, said Thursday"—this is in an Associated Press article—"that President Barack Obama told him Washington had decided to scrap the plan that had deeply angered Russia." It seems to me that is a part of it.

Let's go to the core of this Russian objection. As I have said on the floor, Russia knows this system poses no threat to their massive arsenal. They know that. Their objection to this system has been, in my view, a political objection, a foreign policy bluster and gambit to try to create a problem with the United States and extract something from us. They consistently oppose it.

Let's note the Reuters news article today by Michael Stott, which is an analysis of this. The headline of the article is "Demise of U.S. shield may embolden Russia hawks." In other words, this weakness, this retreat, this backing down may well encourage them to believe that if they are more confrontational on other matters, they may gain more than by being nice to this administration.

The lead paragraph said:

Washington hopes that by backing away from an anti-missile system in east Europe, it will get Russian cooperation on everything from nuclear weapons cuts to efforts to curb Iranian and North Korean nuclear ambitions.

But will Moscow keep its side of the bargain?

That is a good question.

Mr. Stott goes on in his perceptive article to say:

With the shield now on the back burner, both sides believe a deal cutting long-range nuclear arsenals can be inked this year and Russia has already agreed to allow U.S. military cargos to transit across its territory en route to Afghanistan.

That is something we have been asking them for some time, and they have dangled it out there. Apparently, a valuable but not critical ability to transport cargo may have been gained from this.

The author says:

Russian diplomacy is largely a zero-sum game and relies on projecting hard power to forced gains, as in last year's war with Georgia over the rebel regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia or the gas dispute with Ukraine at the start of the year.

Western concepts of "win-win" deals and Obama's drive for 21st century global partnerships are not part of its vocabulary.

The Western idea that if you cut a deal, both sides will benefit—that is not the way the Russians think.

Continuing:

Diplomats here say Moscow hardliners could read the shield backdown as a sign of Washington's weakness. Far from doing the bidding of the United States, they may instead press for further gain to shore up Russian power in the former Soviet bloc.

That is the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Georgia, Poland, the Baltics, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Hungary.

The author goes on to say:

Ukraine, Georgia, and other Kremlin foes in the ex-Soviet Union may be the first to feel the consequences.

Poland and the Czech Republic are also nervous. In Warsaw, the timing of the U.S. move is particularly delicate as it coincides with the 70th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland.

Analysts are particularly concerned about Ukraine, which faces a presidential election next January. Most of Russia's vast gas exports flow through its territory and the country reluctantly hosts a large Russian naval base.

I don't know what the geopolitical goals are here. I think it is a mistake not to deploy this system we committed to deploying. I believe we are not going to be able to rely on the good faith of the Russians, and I think they may misread what we have done. Instead of leading to further accommodation, it may lead to emboldening them to go forward with further demands against the United States.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY SPRAWL AND THE GREEN ECONOMY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar recently announced plans to cover 1,000 square miles of land in Nevada, Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah with solar collectors to generate electricity. He is also talking about generating 20 percent of our electricity from wind. This would require building about 186,000 50-story wind turbines that would cover an area the size of West Virginia, not to mention 19,000 new miles of high-voltage transmission lines.

Is the Federal Government showing any concern about this massive intrusion into the natural landscape? Not at